

About public awareness campaigns

Public – the people in your community.

Awareness – showing understanding or knowledge.

Campaign – activities aimed at reaching an objective.

One public awareness campaign that you may know about is Smokey Bear and his famous warning, "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires." This is the longest running campaign in Advertising Council history. Smokey was introduced to Americans in 1944. The campaign helps educate people about forest fire prevention. Since it began, Smokey's campaign has reduced the number of acres lost each year from 22 million to 4 million.

For more information about Smokey and other *Campaigns That Have Made A Difference* go to The Advertising Council site at

http://www.adcouncil.org/campaigns/historic_campaigns/

Here are some steps to take when planning your campaign:

- ❑ **Agree on an objective** – What do you want to accomplish? What do you want people to know? How do you want them to use that knowledge?
- ❑ **Create a message** – What do you want to say?
- ❑ **Identify your audience** – Who needs to hear your message?
- ❑ **Decide how to send the message** – How will you get people's attention and deliver the message? Some ways are:
 - Printed materials: posters, books, brochures, bookmarks.
 - Letters to the editor or articles in your local newspaper.
 - Radio and TV public service announcements.
 - An event.
 - A booth at a local fair.
 - A Web site.
- ❑ **Make a plan** – What work has to be done? Who will do the work? How much will your campaign cost? When will the campaign begin and end?
- ❑ **Determine how to "grade" your campaign** -- How will you learn whether the campaign was successful?

Tip sheets for writing a letter to the editor, an op-ed (opinion/editorial) piece, or a news release for your local newspaper, pitching a story idea to journalists, and being interviewed are available at the Media Awareness Network online at http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/special_initiatives/toolkit/accessing_media/accessing_mainstream.cfm

Information about creating a public service announcement is online at the SBA Online Women's Business Center "Marketing Mall" under *Effective Media Relations*
<http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/market/index.html>

How to "brainstorm" ideas is contained in an Inventive Thinking Lesson Plan online at About.com -- http://inventors.about.com/library/lessons/bl_activity_1.htm